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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5229
INFO RUEHAB/AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN 0010
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 0121
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 000883

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SHIRLEY LISENBY (AF/W)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/07/2018

TAGS: PREL SP PU

SUBJECT: SPAIN PREPARES FOR SUMMIT WITH SUBSAHARAN AFRICA

REF: MADRID 685

Classified By: ADCM Dan Keller for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Spanish Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Angel Lossada visited Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Guinea-Conakry July 22nd through the 25th to establish a frame of reference for President Zapatero's proposed Spain/West Africa summit. Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Guinea-Conakry all support the planned summit and Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade is assisting with meeting coordination. As of August 8, no date or location has been decided. Proposed participants include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leon, and Togo. The agenda will include regional issues that transcend bilateral relations, Lossada said in an August 4 El Pais report, such as infrastructure, migration flows, agriculture, institutional strengthening and regional integration.

¶2. (SBU) Secretary Lossada's discussions with Senegalese and Gambian authorities during the visit focused on security cooperation and the GOS' assistance with equipment and training for local authorities in the prevention of illegal immigration. On July 24, Lossada met with PM Martino Dafa Kabi and Minister of the Interior Certorio Biote in Guinea-Bissau. The GOGB requested assistance in their fight against trafficking in persons and narcotics trafficking. According to press reports, the GOGB also requested funds for the construction of a road-network for the southern part of the country. The GOS expressed a commitment to assist in the road construction, having already expended 1 million Euros in feasibility studies. The GOS will also give 500,000 Euros to assist in the financing of the GOGB November 16 parliamentary elections. Lossada met with General Juan Esteban Verastegui, Chief of the EU mission in Guinea-Bissau, as well. Verastegui expressed concern that local government authorities do not have the capability to control the country and requested that Spain send 3-4 helicopters to the mission to assist in shore surveillance. Lossada indicated that the GOS would assess the request.

¶3. (C) In a subsequent conversation with Spanish Africa Desk

Officer Carmen Fernandez Torres on August 8, Spanish financial assistance for Guinea-Conakry's democratic development (through the UNDP) was also confirmed. Fernandez explained that an important focus of the Lossada trip and the objective of subsequent aid and development in the region will be "good governance." She also admitted that the MFA is only now engaging with Moncloa on summit planning, calling the summit a "Zapatero initiative." Fernandez anticipates that it will occur before the end of the year.

Aguirre